**Special Economic Zones**

443. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to exempt the Special Economic Zones to be outside the purview of the Employees' Provident Fund Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this decision amounts to infringement of the rights of the workers;

(d) whether Government have evolved any alternative mechanism to ensure the social security measures for the employees; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SISH RAM OLA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It has been decided that in respect of Special Economic Zones, the State Government may apply for exemption, to the Central Government under Section 16(2) of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 from the applicability of the provisions of the Act to SEZ for 5 years. The decision shall be taken on a case-to-case basis.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Does not arise, in view of (c) above.

**Employment growth rate**

444. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the employment growth rate in the organised manufacturing sector in the country showing a negative trend during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the details of the employment generation in the organised manufacturing sector for the above said period, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SISH RAM OLA): (a) Yes, Sir.